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# CONSTITUTION

(FUNDAMENTAL LAW)

*of the*

## UNION OF SOVIET SOCIALIST REPUBLICS

*As amended and supplemented by the First, Second,  
Third, Sixth, Seventh and Eighth Sessions of the  
Supreme Soviet of the USSR*



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This text of the Constitution (Fundamental Law) of the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics, as amended and supplemented by the First, Second, Third, Sixth, Seventh and Eighth Sessions of the Supreme Soviet of the USSR, is issued in connection with the forthcoming elections to the Supreme Soviet of the USSR, the highest organ of state authority.

The Presidium of the Supreme Soviet of the USSR, in conformity with the Constitution and with the "Regulations on Elections to the Supreme Soviet of the USSR," has appointed Sunday, February 10, 1946, as the date of elections to the Supreme Soviet of the USSR.



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## CHAPTER I



# The Organization of Society

### ARTICLE 1

The Union of Soviet Socialist Republics is a socialist state of workers and peasants.

### ARTICLE 2

The Soviets of Working People's Deputies, which grew and attained strength as a result of the overthrow of the landlords and capitalists and the achievement of the dictatorship of the proletariat, constitute the political foundation of the USSR.

### ARTICLE 3

In the USSR all power belongs to the working people of town and country as represented by the Soviets of Working People's Deputies.

### ARTICLE 4

The socialist system of economy and the socialist ownership of the means and instruments of production firmly established as a result of the abolition of the capitalist system of economy, the abrogation of private ownership of the means and instruments of production and the abolition of the exploitation of man by man, constitute the economic foundation of the USSR.

### ARTICLE 5

Socialist property in the USSR exists either in the form of state property (the possession of the whole people), or in the form of cooperative and collective-farm property (property of a collective farm or property of a cooperative association).

### ARTICLE 6

The land, its natural deposits, waters, forests, mills, factories, mines, rail, water and air transport, banks, post, telegraph and telephones, large state-organized agricultural enterprises (state farms, machine and tractor stations and the like) as well as municipal enterprises and the bulk of the dwelling houses in the cities and industrial localities are state property, that is, belong to the whole people.

### ARTICLE 7

Public enterprises in collective farms and cooperative organizations, with their livestock and implements, the products of the

collective farms and cooperative organizations, as well as their common buildings, constitute the common, socialist property of the collective farms and cooperative organizations.

In addition to its basic income from the public, collective farm enterprise, every household in a collective farm has for its personal use a small plot of land attached to the dwelling and, as its personal property, a subsidiary establishment on the plot, a dwelling-house, livestock, poultry and minor agricultural implements—in accordance with the statutes of the agricultural artel.

## ARTICLE 8

The land occupied by collective farms is secured to them for their use free of charge and for an unlimited time, that is, in perpetuity.

## ARTICLE 9

Alongside the socialist system of economy, which is the predominant form of economy in the USSR, the law permits the small private economy of individual peasants and handicraftsmen based on their personal labor and precluding the exploitation of the labor of others.

## ARTICLE 10

The rights of citizens to personal ownership of their incomes from work and of their savings, of their dwelling-houses and subsidiary household economy, their household furniture and utensils and articles of personal use and convenience, as well as the right of inheritance of personal property of citizens, is protected by law.

## ARTICLE 11

The economic life of the USSR is determined and directed by the state national economic plan with the aim of increasing the public wealth, of steadily improving the material conditions of the working people and raising their cultural level, of consolidating the independence of the USSR and strengthening its defensive capacity.

## ARTICLE 12

In the USSR work is a duty and a matter of honor for every able-bodied citizen, in accordance with the principle:

"He who does not work, neither shall he eat."

The principle applied in the USSR is that of socialism:

"From each according to his ability, to each according to his work."



## CHAPTER II



# The Organization of the State

### ARTICLE 13

The Union of Soviet Socialist Republics is a federal state, formed on the basis of the voluntary association of Soviet Socialist Republics having equal rights, namely:

- The Russian Soviet Federative Socialist Republic
- The Ukrainian Soviet Socialist Republic
- The Byelorussian Soviet Socialist Republic
- The Azerbaijan Soviet Socialist Republic
- The Georgian Soviet Socialist Republic
- The Armenian Soviet Socialist Republic
- The Turkmen Soviet Socialist Republic
- The Uzbek Soviet Socialist Republic
- The Tajik Soviet Socialist Republic
- The Kazakh Soviet Socialist Republic
- The Kirghiz Soviet Socialist Republic
- The Karelo-Finnish Soviet Socialist Republic
- The Moldavian Soviet Socialist Republic
- The Lithuanian Soviet Socialist Republic
- The Latvian Soviet Socialist Republic
- The Estonian Soviet Socialist Republic.

### ARTICLE 14

The jurisdiction of the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics, as represented by its highest organs of state authority and organs of government, covers:

\*(a) Representation of the Union in international relations, conclusion and ratification of treaties with other states;

(b) Questions of war and peace;

(c) Admission of new republics into the USSR;

(d) Control over the observance of the Constitution of the USSR and ensuring conformity of the Constitutions of the Union Republics with the Constitution of the USSR;

(e) Confirmation of alterations of boundaries between Union Republics;

(f) Confirmation of the formation of new Territories and Regions and also of new Autonomous Republics within Union Republics;

\*(g) Organization of the defense of the USSR and direction of all the armed forces of the USSR;

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\* See APPENDIX, pages 30 and 31.

- (*h*) Foreign trade on the basis of state monopoly;
- (*i*) Safeguarding the security of the state;
- (*j*) Establishment of the national economic plans of the USSR;
- (*k*) Approval of the single state budget of the USSR, as well as of the taxes and revenues which go to the all-Union, Republican and local budgets;
- (*l*) Administration of the banks, industrial and agricultural establishments and enterprises and trading enterprises of all-Union importance;
- (*m*) Administration of transport and communications;
- (*n*) Direction of the monetary and credit system;
- (*o*) Organization of state insurance;
- (*p*) Raising and granting of loans;
- (*q*) Establishment of the basic principles for the use of land as well as for the use of natural deposits, forests and waters;
- (*r*) Establishment of the basic principles in the spheres of education and public health;
- (*s*) Organization of a uniform system of national economic statistics;
- (*t*) Establishment of the principles of labor legislation;
- (*u*) Legislation on the judicial system and judicial procedure; criminal and civil codes;
- (*v*) Laws on citizenship of the Union; laws on the rights of foreigners;
- (*w*) Issuing of all-Union acts of amnesty.

## ARTICLE 15

The sovereignty of the Union Republics is limited only within the provisions set forth in Article 14 of the Constitution of the USSR. Outside of these provisions, each Union Republic exercises state authority independently. The USSR protects the sovereign rights of the Union Republics.

## ARTICLE 16

Each Union Republic has its own Constitution, which takes account of the specific features of the Republic and is drawn up in full conformity with the Constitution of the USSR.

## ARTICLE 17

To every Union Republic is reserved the right freely to secede from the USSR.

## ARTICLE 18 \*

The territory of a Union Republic may not be altered without its consent.

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\* See APPENDIX, pages 30 and 31.



## ARTICLE 19

The laws of the USSR have the same force within the territory of every Union Republic.

## ARTICLE 20

In the event of a discrepancy between a law of a Union Republic and an all-Union law, the all-Union law prevails.

## ARTICLE 21

A single Union citizenship is established for all citizens of the USSR.

Every citizen of a Union Republic is a citizen of the USSR.

## ARTICLE 22

The Russian Soviet Federative Socialist Republic consists of the Altai, Krasnodar, Krasnoyarsk, Orjonikidze, Primorye and Khabarovsk Territories; the Archangel, Vologda, Voronezh, Gorky, Ivanovo, Irkutsk, Kalinin, Kirov, Kuibyshev, Kursk, Leningrad, Molotov, Moscow, Murmansk, Novosibirsk, Omsk, Orel, Penza, Rostov, Ryazan, Saratov, Sverdlovsk, Smolensk, Stalingrad, Tambov, Tula, Chelyabinsk, Chita, Chkalov and Yaroslavl Regions; the Tatar, Bashkir, Daghestan, Buryat-Mongolian, Kabardino-Balkarian, Kalmyk, Komi, Crimean, Mari, Mordovian, Volga German, North Ossetian, Udmurt, Chechen-Ingush, Chuvash and Yakut Autonomous Soviet Socialist Republics; and the Adygei, Jewish, Karachai, Oirat, Khakass and Cherkess Autonomous regions.

## ARTICLE 23

The Ukrainian Soviet Socialist Republic consists of the Vinnitsa, Volhynia, Voroshilovgrad, Dniepropetrovsk, Drohobych, Zhitomir, Zaporozhye, Izmail, Kamenets-Podolsk, Kiev, Kirovograd, Lvov, Nikolayev, Odessa, Poltava, Rovno, Stalino, Stanislav, Sumy, Tarnopol, Kharkov, Chernigov and Chernovitsy Regions.

## ARTICLE 24

The Azerbaijan Soviet Socialist Republic includes the Nakhichevan Autonomous Soviet Socialist Republic and the Nagorno-Karabakh Autonomous Region.

## ARTICLE 25

The Georgian Soviet Socialist Republic includes the Abkhazian Autonomous Soviet Socialist Republic, the Adjar Autonomous Soviet Socialist Republic and the South Ossetian Autonomous Region.

## ARTICLE 26

The Uzbek Soviet Socialist Republic consists of the Bukhara,

Samarkand, Tashkent, Ferghana and Kharezmi Regions, and the Kara-Kalpak Autonomous Soviet Socialist Republic.

#### ARTICLE 27

The Tajik Soviet Socialist Republic includes the Garm, Kulyab, Leninabad, Stalinabad and the Gorno-Badakhshan Autonomous Region.

#### ARTICLE 28

The Kazakh Soviet Socialist Republic consists of the Akmolinsk, Aktyubinsk, Alma-Ata, East Kazakhstan, Guryev, Jambul, West Kazakhstan, Karaganda, Kzyl-Orda, Kustanai, Pavlodar, North Kazakhstan, Semipalatinsk and South Kazakhstan Regions.

#### ARTICLE 29

The Byelorussian Soviet Socialist Republic consists of the Baranovichy, Byelostok, Brest, Vileysk, Vitebsk, Gomel, Minsk, Moghilev, Pinsk and Polesye Regions.

#### ARTICLE 29a

The Turkmenian Soviet Socialist Republic consists of the Ashkhabad, Krasnovodsk, Mari, Tashauz and Charjow Regions.

#### ARTICLE 29b

The Kirghiz Soviet Socialist Republic consists of the Djalal-Abad, Issyk-Kul, Osh, Tien-Shan and Frunze Regions.

### CHAPTER III



## The Highest Organs of State Authority of the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics

#### ARTICLE 30

The highest organ of state authority of the USSR is the Supreme Soviet of the USSR.

#### ARTICLE 31

The Supreme Soviet of the USSR exercises all rights vested in the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics in accordance with Article 14 of the Constitution, in so far as they do not, by virtue of the



Constitution, come within the jurisdiction of organs of the USSR that are accountable to the Supreme Soviet of the USSR, that is, the Presidium of the Supreme Soviet of the USSR, the Council of People's Commissars of the USSR and the People's Commissariats of the USSR.

#### ARTICLE 32

The legislative power of the USSR is exercised exclusively by the Supreme Soviet of the USSR.

#### ARTICLE 33

The Supreme Soviet of the USSR consists of two Chambers: the Soviet of the Union and the Soviet of Nationalities.

#### ARTICLE 34

The Soviet of the Union is elected by the citizens of the USSR according to electoral areas on the basis of one deputy for every 300,000 of the population.

#### ARTICLE 35

The Soviet of Nationalities is elected by the citizens of the USSR according to Union and Autonomous Republics, Autonomous Regions and national areas on the basis of twenty-five deputies from each Union Republic, eleven deputies from each Autonomous Republic, five deputies from each Autonomous Region and one deputy from each national area.

#### ARTICLE 36

The Supreme Soviet of the USSR is elected for a term of four years.

#### ARTICLE 37

Both Chambers of the Supreme Soviet of the USSR, the Soviet of the Union and the Soviet of Nationalities, have equal rights.

#### ARTICLE 38

The Soviet of the Union and the Soviet of Nationalities have an equal right to initiate legislation.

#### ARTICLE 39

A law is considered adopted if passed by both Chambers of the Supreme Soviet of the USSR by a simple majority vote in each.

#### ARTICLE 40

Laws passed by the Supreme Soviet of the USSR are published in the languages of the Union Republics over the signatures of the President and Secretary of the Presidium of the Supreme Soviet of the USSR.

#### ARTICLE 41

Sessions of the Soviet of the Union and the Soviet of Nationalities begin and terminate simultaneously.

#### ARTICLE 42

The Soviet of the Union elects a Chairman of the Soviet of the Union and two Vice-Chairmen.

#### ARTICLE 43

The Soviet of Nationalities elects a Chairman of the Soviet of Nationalities and two Vice-Chairmen.

#### ARTICLE 44

The Chairmen of the Soviet of the Union and the Soviet of Nationalities preside over the sittings of the respective Chambers and direct the procedure of these bodies.

#### ARTICLE 45

Joint sittings of both Chambers of the Supreme Soviet of the USSR are presided over alternately by the Chairman of the Soviet of the Union and the Chairman of the Soviet of Nationalities.

#### ARTICLE 46

Sessions of the Supreme Soviet of the USSR are convened by the Presidium of the Supreme Soviet of the USSR twice a year.

Special sessions are convened by the Presidium of the Supreme Soviet of the USSR at its discretion or on the demand of one of the Union Republics.

#### ARTICLE 47

In the event of disagreement between the Soviet of the Union and the Soviet of Nationalities, the question is referred for settlement to a conciliation commission formed on a parity basis. If the conciliation commission fails to arrive at an agreement, or if its decision fails to satisfy one of the Chambers, the question is considered for a second time by the Chambers. Failing agreement between the two Chambers, the Presidium of the Supreme Soviet of the USSR dissolves the Supreme Soviet of the USSR and orders new elections.

#### ARTICLE 48

The Supreme Soviet of the USSR at a joint sitting of both Chambers elects the Presidium of the Supreme Soviet of the USSR, consisting of a President of the Presidium of the Supreme Soviet of the USSR, sixteen Vice-Presidents, a Secretary of the Presidium and twenty-four members of the Presidium.

The Presidium of the Supreme Soviet of the USSR is accountable to the Supreme Soviet of the USSR for all its activities.



## ARTICLE 49

The Presidium of the Supreme Soviet of the USSR:

- (a) Convenes the sessions of the Supreme Soviet of the USSR;
- (b) Interprets laws of the USSR in operation, issues decrees;
- (c) Dissolves the Supreme Soviet of the USSR in conformity with Article 47 of the Constitution of the USSR and orders new elections;
- (d) Conducts referendums on its own initiative or on the demand of one of the Union Republics;
- (e) Annuls decisions and orders of the Council of People's Commissars of the USSR and of the Councils of People's Commissars of the Union Republics in case they do not conform to law;
- (f) In the intervals between sessions of the Supreme Soviet of the USSR, relieves of their posts and appoints People's Commissars of the USSR on the recommendation of the Chairman of the Council of People's Commissars of the USSR, subject to subsequent confirmation by the Supreme Soviet of the USSR;
- (g) Awards decorations and confers titles of honor of the USSR;
- (h) Exercises the right of pardon;
- (i) Appoints and removes the higher commands of the armed forces of the USSR;
- (j) In the intervals between sessions of the Supreme Soviet of the USSR, proclaims a state of war in the event of armed attack on the USSR, or whenever necessary to fulfill international treaty obligations concerning mutual defense against aggression;
- (k) Orders general or partial mobilization;
- (l) Ratifies international treaties;
- (m) Appoints and recalls plenipotentiary representatives of the USSR to foreign states;
- (n) Receives the credentials and letters of recall of diplomatic representatives accredited to it by foreign states;
- (o) Proclaims martial law in separate localities or throughout the USSR in the interests of the defense of the USSR or for the purpose of ensuring public order and state security.

## ARTICLE 50

The Soviet of the Union and the Soviet of Nationalities elect Credentials Commissions which verify the credentials of the members of the respective Chambers.

On the recommendation of the Credentials Commissions, the Chambers decide either to endorse the credentials or to annul the election of the deputies concerned.

## ARTICLE 51

The Supreme Soviet of the USSR, when it deems necessary, appoints commissions of inquiry and investigation on any matter.

It is the duty of all institutions and public servants to comply with the demands of these commissions and to submit to them the necessary materials and documents.

## ARTICLE 52

A member of the Supreme Soviet of the USSR may not be prosecuted or arrested without the consent of the Supreme Soviet of the USSR, and during the period when the Supreme Soviet of the USSR is not in session, without the consent of the Presidium of the Supreme Soviet of the USSR.

## ARTICLE 53

On the expiration of the term of office of the Supreme Soviet of the USSR, or after the dissolution of the Supreme Soviet prior to the expiration of its term of office, the Presidium of the Supreme Soviet of the USSR retains its powers until the formation of a new Presidium of the Supreme Soviet of the USSR by the newly-elected Supreme Soviet of the USSR.

## ARTICLE 54

On the expiration of the term of office of the Supreme Soviet of the USSR, or in the event of its dissolution prior to the expiration of its term of office, the Presidium of the Supreme Soviet of the USSR orders new elections to be held within a period not exceeding two months from the date of expiration of the term of office or dissolution of the Supreme Soviet of the USSR.

## ARTICLE 55

The newly-elected Supreme Soviet of the USSR is convened by the outgoing Presidium of the Supreme Soviet of the USSR not later than one month after the elections.

## ARTICLE 56

The Supreme Soviet of the USSR, at a joint sitting of both Chambers, appoints the Government of the USSR, namely, the Council of People's Commissars of the USSR.



## CHAPTER IV



# The Highest Organs of State Authority of the Union Republics

### ARTICLE 57

The highest organ of state authority of a Union Republic is the Supreme Soviet of the Union Republic.

### ARTICLE 58

The Supreme Soviet of a Union Republic is elected by the citizens of the Republic for a term of four years.

The basis of representation is established by the Constitution of the Union Republic.

### ARTICLE 59

The Supreme Soviet of a Union Republic is the sole legislative organ of the Republic.

### ARTICLE 60 \*

The Supreme Soviet of a Union Republic:

(a) Adopts the Constitution of the Republic and amends it in conformity with Article 16 of the Constitution of the USSR;

(b) Confirms the Constitutions of the Autonomous Republics forming part of it and defines the boundaries of their territories;

(c) Approves the national economic plan and also the budget of the Republic;

(d) Exercises the right of amnesty and pardon of citizens sentenced by the judicial organs of the Union Republic.

### ARTICLE 61

The Supreme Soviet of a Union Republic elects the Presidium of the Supreme Soviet of the Union Republic, consisting of a Chairman of the Presidium of the Supreme Soviet of the Union Republic, Vice-Chairman, a Secretary of the Presidium and members of the Presidium of the Supreme Soviet of the Union Republic.

The powers of the Presidium of the Supreme Soviet of a Union Republic are defined by the Constitution of the Union Republic.

### ARTICLE 62

The Supreme Soviet of a Union Republic elects a Chairman and Vice-Chairman to conduct its sittings.

### ARTICLE 63

The Supreme Soviet of a Union Republic appoints the Government of the Union Republic, namely, the Council of People's Commissars of the Union Republic.

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\* See APPENDIX, pages 30 and 31.

## CHAPTER V



# The Organs of Government of the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics

### ARTICLE 64

The highest executive and administrative organ of state authority of the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics is the Council of People's Commissars of the USSR.

### ARTICLE 65

The Council of People's Commissars of the USSR is responsible to the Supreme Soviet of the USSR and accountable to it; and in the intervals between sessions of the Supreme Soviet it is responsible and accountable to the Presidium of the Supreme Soviet of the USSR.

### ARTICLE 66

The Council of People's Commissars of the USSR issues decisions and orders on the basis and in pursuance of the laws in operation, and supervises their execution.

### ARTICLE 67

Decisions and orders of the Council of People's Commissars of the USSR are binding throughout the territory of the USSR.

### ARTICLE 68

The Council of People's Commissars of the USSR:

(a) Coordinates and directs the work of the All-Union and Union-Republican People's Commissariats of the USSR and of other institutions, economic and cultural, under its administration;

(b) Adopts measures to carry out the national economic plan and the state budget, and to strengthen the credit and monetary system;

(c) Adopts measures for the maintenance of public order, for the protection of the interests of the state, and for the safeguarding of the rights of citizens;

(d) Exercises general guidance in respect of relations with foreign states;

(e) Fixes the annual contingent of citizens to be called up for military service and directs the general organization and development of the armed forces of the country;

(f) Sets up, whenever necessary, special committees and central



administrations under the Council of People's Commissars of the USSR for matters concerning economic, cultural and defense organization and development.

#### ARTICLE 69

The Council of People's Commissars of the USSR has the right, in respect of those branches of administration and economy which come within the jurisdiction of the USSR, to suspend decisions and orders of the Councils of People's Commissars of the Union Republics and to annul orders and instructions of People's Commissars of the USSR.

#### ARTICLE 70

The Council of People's Commissars of the USSR is appointed by the Supreme Soviet of the USSR and consists of:

The Chairman of the Council of People's Commissars of the USSR;

The Vice-Chairmen of the Council of People's Commissars of the USSR;

The Chairman of the State Planning Commission of the USSR;

The Chairman of the Soviet Control Commission;

The People's Commissars of the USSR;

The Chairman of the Committee on Arts;

The Chairman of the Committee on Higher Education;

The Chairman of the Board of the State Bank.

#### ARTICLE 71

The Government of the USSR or a People's Commissar of the USSR to whom a question of a member of the Supreme Soviet of the USSR is addressed must give a verbal or written reply in the respective Chamber within a period not exceeding three days.

#### ARTICLE 72

The People's Commissars of the USSR direct the branches of state administration which come within the jurisdiction of the USSR.

#### ARTICLE 73

The People's Commissars of the USSR issue, within the limits of the jurisdiction of the respective People's Commissariats, orders and instructions on the basis and in pursuance of the laws in operation, and also of decisions and orders of the Council of People's Commissars of the USSR, and supervise their execution.

#### ARTICLE 74

The People's Commissariats of the USSR are either All-Union or Union-Republican Commissariats.

## ARTICLE 75

The All-Union People's Commissariats direct the branches of state administration entrusted to them throughout the territory of the USSR either directly or through bodies appointed by them.

## ARTICLE 76

The Union-Republican People's Commissariats, as a rule, direct the branches of state administration entrusted to them through the corresponding People's Commissariats of the Union Republics; they administer directly only a definite and limited number of enterprises according to a list confirmed by the Presidium of the Supreme Soviet of the USSR.

## ARTICLE 77 \*

The following People's Commissariats are All-Union People's Commissariats:

Defense	Non-Ferrous Metals Industry
Foreign Affairs	Chemical Industry
Foreign Trade	Aircraft Industry
Railways	Shipbuilding Industry
Post, Telegraph and Telephones	Munitions Industry
Maritime Fleet	Armaments Industry
River Fleet	Heavy Machine-Building
Mining Industry	Medium Machine-Building
Oil Industry	General Machine-Building
Electric Power Stations	Navy
Electrical Engineering	Agricultural Stocks
Iron and Steel Industry	Building Industry
	Cellulose and Paper Industry.

## ARTICLE 78 \*

The following People's Commissariats are Union-Republican People's Commissariats:

Food Industry	Finance
Fishing Industry	Trade
Meat and Dairy Produce Industry	Internal Affairs
Light Industry	State Security
Textile Industry	Justice
Timber Industry	Public Health
Agriculture	Building Materials Industry
State Grain and Livestock Farms	State Control.

\* See APPENDIX, pages 30 and 31.



## CHAPTER VI



# The Organs of Government of the Union Republics

### ARTICLE 79

The highest executive and administrative organ of state authority of a Union Republic is the Council of People's Commissars of the Union Republic.

### ARTICLE 80

The Council of People's Commissars of a Union Republic is responsible to the Supreme Soviet of the Union Republic and accountable to it; and in the intervals between sessions of the Supreme Soviet of the Union Republic it is responsible and accountable to the Presidium of the Supreme Soviet of the respective Union Republic.

### ARTICLE 81

The Council of People's Commissars of a Union Republic issues decisions and orders on the basis and in pursuance of the laws in operation of the USSR and of the Union Republic, and of the decisions and orders of the Council of People's Commissars of the USSR, and supervises their execution.

### ARTICLE 82

The Council of People's Commissars of a Union Republic has the right to suspend decisions and orders of Councils of People's Commissars of Autonomous Republics, and to annul decisions and orders of Executive Committees of Soviets of Working People's Deputies of Territories, Regions and Autonomous Regions.

### ARTICLE 83

The Council of People's Commissars of a Union Republic is appointed by the Supreme Soviet of the Union Republic and consists of:

The Chairman of the Council of People's Commissars of the Union Republic;

The Vice-Chairmen;

The Chairman of the State Planning Commission;

The People's Commissars of:

Food Industry  
Fishing Industry  
Meat and Dairy Produce Industry  
Light Industry  
Textile Industry  
Timber Industry  
Building Materials Industry  
Agriculture  
State Grain and Livestock Farms  
Finance  
Trade

Internal Affairs  
State Security  
Justice  
Public Health  
State Control  
Education  
Local Industry  
Municipal Economy  
Social Maintenance  
Motor Transport

The Chief of the Arts Administration;

The Representatives of the All-Union People's Commissariats.

#### ARTICLE 84

The People's Commissars of a Union Republic direct the branches of state administration which come within the jurisdiction of the Union Republic.

#### ARTICLE 85

The People's Commissars of a Union Republic issue, within the limits of the jurisdiction of their respective People's Commissariats, orders and instructions on the basis and in pursuance of the laws of the USSR and of the Union Republic, of the decisions and orders of the Council of People's Commissars of the USSR and that of the Union Republic, and of the orders and instructions of the Union-Republican People's Commissariats of the USSR.

#### ARTICLE 86

The People's Commissariats of a Union Republic are either Union-Republican or Republican Commissariats.

#### ARTICLE 87

The Union-Republican People's Commissariats direct the branches of state administration entrusted to them, and are subordinate both to the Council of People's Commissars of the Union Republic and to the corresponding Union-Republican People's Commissariats of the USSR.

#### ARTICLE 88

The Republican People's Commissariats direct the branches of state administration entrusted to them and are directly subordinate to the Council of People's Commissars of the Union Republic.

## CHAPTER VII



# The Highest Organs of State Authority of the Autonomous Soviet Socialist Republics

### ARTICLE 89

The highest organ of state authority of an Autonomous Republic is the Supreme Soviet of the Autonomous Soviet Socialist Republic.

### ARTICLE 90

The Supreme Soviet of an Autonomous Republic is elected by the citizens of the Republic for a term of four years on the basis of representation established by the Constitution of the Autonomous Republic.

### ARTICLE 91

The Supreme Soviet of an Autonomous Republic is the sole legislative organ of the Autonomous Soviet Socialist Republic.

### ARTICLE 92

Each Autonomous Republic has its own Constitution, which takes account of the specific features of the Autonomous Republic and is drawn up in full conformity with the Constitution of the Union Republic.

### ARTICLE 93

The Supreme Soviet of an Autonomous Republic elects the Presidium of the Supreme Soviet of the Autonomous Republic and appoints the Council of People's Commissars of the Autonomous Republic, in accordance with its Constitution.

## CHAPTER VIII



# The Local Organs of State Authority

### ARTICLE 94

The organs of state authority in territories, regions, autonomous regions, areas, districts, cities and rural localities (stanitsas, villages,



hamlets, kishlaks, auls) are the Soviets of Working People's Deputies.

#### ARTICLE 95

The Soviets of Working People's Deputies of territories, regions, autonomous regions, areas, districts, cities and rural localities (stanitsas, villages, hamlets, kishlaks, auls) are elected by the working people of the respective territories, regions, autonomous regions, areas, districts, cities or rural localities for a term of two years.

#### ARTICLE 96

The basis of representation for Soviets of Working People's Deputies is defined by the Constitution of the Union Republics.

#### ARTICLE 97

The Soviets of Working People's Deputies direct the work of the organs of administration subordinate to them, ensure the maintenance of public order, the observance of the laws and the protection of the rights of citizens, direct local economic and cultural organization and development and draw up the local budgets.

#### ARTICLE 98

The Soviets of Working People's Deputies adopt decisions and issue orders within the limits of the powers vested in them by the laws of the USSR and of the Union Republic.

#### ARTICLE 99

The executive and administrative organs of the Soviets of Working People's Deputies of territories, regions, autonomous regions, areas, districts, cities and rural localities are the Executive Committees elected by them, consisting of a Chairman, Vice-Chairman, a Secretary and members.

#### ARTICLE 100

The executive and administrative organ of rural Soviets of Working People's Deputies in small localities, in accordance with the Constitutions of the Union Republics, is the Chairman, the Vice-Chairman and the Secretary elected by them.

#### ARTICLE 101

The executive organs of the Soviets of Working People's Deputies are directly accountable both to the Soviets of Working People's Deputies which elected them and to the executive organ of the superior Soviet of Working People's Deputies.



## CHAPTER IX



# The Courts and the Procurator's Office

### ARTICLE 102

In the USSR justice is administered by the Supreme Court of the USSR, the Supreme Courts of the Union Republics, the Territorial and the Regional Courts, the Courts of the Autonomous Republics and the Autonomous Regions, the Area Courts, the special courts of the USSR established by decision of the Supreme Soviet of the USSR, and the People's Courts.

### ARTICLE 103

In all courts cases are tried with the participation of people's assessors, except in cases specially provided for by law.

### ARTICLE 104

The Supreme Court of the USSR is the highest judicial organ. The Supreme Court of the USSR is charged with the supervision of the judicial activities of all the judicial organs of the USSR and of the Union Republics.

### ARTICLE 105

The Supreme Court of the USSR and the Special Courts of the USSR are elected by the Supreme Soviet of the USSR for a term of five years.

### ARTICLE 106

The Supreme Courts of the Union Republics are elected by the Supreme Soviets of the Union Republics for a term of five years.

### ARTICLE 107

The Supreme Courts of the Autonomous Republics are elected by the Supreme Soviets of the Autonomous Republics for a term of five years.

### ARTICLE 108

The Territorial and the Regional Courts, the Courts of the Autonomous Regions and the Area Courts are elected by the Territorial, Regional or Area Soviets of Working People's Deputies or by the Soviets of Working People's Deputies of the Autonomous Regions for a term of five years.

## ARTICLE 109

People's Courts are elected by the citizens of the district on the basis of universal, direct and equal suffrage by secret ballot for a term of three years.

## ARTICLE 110

Judicial proceedings are conducted in the language of the Union Republic, Autonomous Republic or Autonomous Region, persons not knowing this language being guaranteed every opportunity of fully acquainting themselves with the material of the case through an interpreter and likewise the right to use their own language in court.

## ARTICLE 111

In all Courts of the USSR cases are heard in public, unless otherwise provided for by law, and the accused is guaranteed the right to be defended by Counsel.

## ARTICLE 112

Judges are independent and subject only to the law.

## ARTICLE 113

Supreme supervisory power over the strict execution of the laws by all People's Commissariats and institutions subordinated to them, as well as by public servants and citizens of the USSR, is vested in the Procurator of the USSR.

## ARTICLE 114

The Procurator of the USSR is appointed by the Supreme Soviet of the USSR for a term of seven years.

## ARTICLE 115

Procurators of Republics, Territories and Regions, as well as Procurators of Autonomous Republics and Autonomous Regions are appointed by the Procurator of the USSR for a term of five years.

## ARTICLE 116

Area, district and city Procurators are appointed for a term of five years by the Procurators of the Union Republics, subject to the approval of the Procurator of the USSR.

## ARTICLE 117

The organs of the Procurator's Office perform their functions independently of any local organs whatsoever, being subordinate solely to the Procurator of the USSR.



## CHAPTER X



# Fundamental Rights and Duties of Citizens

### ARTICLE 118

Citizens of the USSR have the right to work, that is, are guaranteed the right to employment and payment for their work in accordance with its quantity and quality.

The right to work is ensured by the socialist organization of the national economy, the steady growth of the productive forces of Soviet society, the elimination of the possibility of economic crises, and the abolition of unemployment.

### ARTICLE 119

Citizens of the USSR have the right to rest and leisure.

The right to rest and leisure is ensured by the reduction of the working day to seven hours for the overwhelming majority of the workers, the institution of annual vacations with full pay for workers and employees and the provision of a wide network of sanatoriums, rest homes and clubs for the accommodation of the working people.

### ARTICLE 120

Citizens of the USSR have the right to maintenance in old age and also in case of sickness or loss of capacity to work.

This right is ensured by the extensive development of social insurance of workers and employees at state expense, free medical service for the working people and the provision of a wide network of health resorts for the use of the working people.

### ARTICLE 121

Citizens of the USSR have the right to education.

This right is ensured by universal, compulsory elementary education; by education, including higher education, being free of charge; by the system of state stipends for the overwhelming majority of students in the universities and colleges; by instruction in schools being conducted in the native language, and by the organization in the factories, state farms, machine and tractor stations and collective farms of free vocational, technical and agronomic training for the working people.

### ARTICLE 122

Women in the USSR are accorded equal rights with men in all spheres of economic, state, cultural, social and political life.



The possibility of exercising these rights is ensured to women by granting them an equal right with men to work, payment for work, rest and leisure, social insurance and education, and by state protection of the interests of mother and child, pre-maternity and maternity leave with full pay, and the provision of a wide network of maternity homes, nurseries and kindergartens.

#### ARTICLE 123

Equality of rights of citizens of the USSR, irrespective of their nationality or race, in all spheres of economic, state, cultural, social and political life, is an infeasible law.

Any direct or indirect restriction of the rights of, or, conversely, any establishment of direct or indirect privileges for, citizens on account of their race or nationality, as well as any advocacy of racial or national exclusiveness or hatred and contempt, is punishable by law.

#### ARTICLE 124

In order to ensure to citizens freedom of conscience, the church in the USSR is separated from the state, and the school from the church. Freedom of religious worship and freedom of anti-religious propaganda is recognized for all citizens.

#### ARTICLE 125

In conformity with the interests of the working people, and in order to strengthen the socialist system, the citizens of the USSR are guaranteed by law:

- (a) Freedom of speech;
- (b) Freedom of the press;
- (c) Freedom of assembly, including the holding of mass meetings;
- (d) Freedom of street processions and demonstrations.

These civil rights are ensured by placing at the disposal of the working people and their organizations printing presses, stocks of paper, public buildings, the streets, communications facilities and other material requisites for the exercise of these rights.

#### ARTICLE 126

In conformity with the interests of the working people, and in order to develop the organizational initiative and political activity of the masses of the people, citizens of the USSR are ensured the right to unite in public organizations—trade unions, cooperative associations, youth organizations, sport and defense organizations, cultural, technical and scientific societies; and the most active and politically most conscious citizens in the ranks of the working class and other sections of the working people unite in the Communist

Party of the Soviet Union (Bolsheviks), which is the vanguard of the working people in their struggle to strengthen and develop the socialist system and is the leading core of all organizations of the working people, both public and state.

#### ARTICLE 127

Citizens of the USSR are guaranteed inviolability of the person. No person may be placed under arrest except by decision of a court or with the sanction of a procurator.

#### ARTICLE 128

The inviolability of the homes of citizens and privacy of correspondence are protected by law.

#### ARTICLE 129

The USSR affords the right of asylum to foreign citizens persecuted for defending the interests of the working people, or for their scientific activities, or for their struggle for national liberation.

#### ARTICLE 130

It is the duty of every citizen of the USSR to abide by the Constitution of the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics, to observe the laws, to maintain labor discipline, honestly to perform public duties, and to respect the rules of socialist intercourse.

#### ARTICLE 131

It is the duty of every citizen of the USSR to safeguard and strengthen public, socialist property as the sacred and inviolable foundation of the Soviet system, as the source of the wealth and might of the country, as the source of the prosperous and cultured life of all the working people.

Persons committing offenses against public, socialist property are enemies of the people.

#### ARTICLE 132

Universal military service is law.

Military service in the Workers' and Peasants' Red Army is an honorable duty of the citizens of the USSR.

#### ARTICLE 133

To defend the fatherland is the sacred duty of every citizen of the USSR. Treason to the country—violation of the oath of allegiance, desertion to the enemy, impairing the military power of the state, espionage—is punishable with all the severity of the law as the most heinous of crimes.



## CHAPTER XI



# The Electoral System

### ARTICLE 134

Members of all Soviets of Working People's Deputies—of the Supreme Soviet of the USSR, the Supreme Soviets of the Union Republics, the Soviets of Working People's Deputies of the Territories and Regions, the Supreme Soviets of the Autonomous Republics, the Soviets of Working People's Deputies of Autonomous Regions, area, district, city and rural (stanitsa, village, hamlet, kishlak, aul) Soviets of Working People's Deputies—are chosen by the electors on the basis of universal, direct and equal suffrage by secret ballot.

### ARTICLE 135

Elections of deputies are universal: all citizens of the USSR who have reached the age of eighteen, irrespective of race or nationality, religion, educational and residential qualifications, social origin, property status or past activities, have the right to vote in the election of deputies and to be elected, with the exception of insane persons and persons who have been convicted by a court of law and whose sentences include deprivation of electoral rights.

### ARTICLE 136

Elections of deputies are equal: each citizen has one vote; all citizens participate in elections on an equal footing.

### ARTICLE 137

Women have the right to elect and be elected on equal terms with men.

### ARTICLE 138

Citizens serving in the Red Army have the right to elect and be elected on equal terms with all other citizens.

### ARTICLE 139

Elections of deputies are direct: all Soviets of Working People's Deputies, from rural and city Soviets of Working People's Deputies to the Supreme Soviet of the USSR, inclusive, are elected by the citizens by direct vote.

### ARTICLE 140

Voting at elections of deputies is secret.



## ARTICLE 141

Candidates for election are nominated according to electoral areas.

The right to nominate candidates is secured to public organizations and societies of the working people: Communist Party organizations, trade unions, cooperatives, youth organizations and cultural societies.

## ARTICLE 142

It is the duty of every deputy to report to his electors on his work and on the work of the Soviet of Working People's Deputies, and he is liable to be recalled at any time in the manner established by law upon decision of a majority of the electors.

## CHAPTER XII



# Arms, Flag, Capital

## ARTICLE 143

The arms of the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics consists of a sickle and hammer against a globe depicted in the rays of the sun and surrounded by ears of grain with the inscription "Workers of All Countries, Unite!" in the languages of the Union Republics. At the top of the arms is a five-pointed star.

## ARTICLE 144

The state flag of the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics is of red cloth with the sickle and hammer depicted in gold in the upper corner near the staff and above them a five-pointed red star bordered in gold. The ratio of the width to the length is 1:2.

## ARTICLE 145

The capital of the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics is the City of Moscow.

## CHAPTER XIII



# Procedure for Amending the Constitution

## ARTICLE 146

The Constitution of the USSR may be amended only by decision of the Supreme Soviet of the USSR adopted by a majority of not less than two-thirds of the votes cast in each of its Chambers.

## APPENDIX

### LAW

**On the formation of Army Units of the Union Republics and on the transformation, in this connection, of the People's Commissariat for Defense from an All-Union into a Union-Republican People's Commissariat.**

With the aim of strengthening the defensive power of the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics, the Supreme Soviet of the USSR decrees:

1. To establish that the Union Republics shall organize military formations of the Republics.

2. To insert into the Constitution of the USSR the following additions:

(a) Supplement Article 14, point (g) of the Constitution after the words "Organization of the defense of the USSR and direction of all the armed forces of the USSR" with the words: "The establishment of the directing principles of the organization of military formations of the Union Republics." This point thus reads:

"(g) Organization of the defense of the USSR, the direction of all the armed forces of the USSR, the establishment of the directing principles of the organization of military formations of the Union Republics."

(b) Supplement the Constitution of the USSR with Article 18b as follows:

"Article 18b. Each Union Republic has its Republican military formations."

(c) Supplement Article 60 of the Constitution of the USSR with point (f) as follows:

"(f) Establishes the procedure for creating Republican military formations."

3. To transform the People's Commissariat for Defense from an All-Union into a Union-Republican People's Commissariat.

(Signed) KALININ, Chairman of the Presidium of the Supreme Soviet of the USSR.

GORKIN, Secretary of the Presidium of the Supreme Soviet of the USSR.

*Moscow, Kremlin, February 1, 1944*



# LAW

**On the granting to Union Republics of authority in the sphere of Foreign Relations and on the transformation, in this connection, of the People's Commissariat for Foreign Affairs from an All-Union into a Union-Republican People's Commissariat.**

With the aim of widening the international connections of the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics, and strengthening its collaboration with other states, and taking into consideration the growing needs of the Union Republics to establish direct relations with foreign states, the Supreme Soviet of the USSR decrees:

1. To establish that Union Republics may enter into direct relations with foreign states and conclude agreements with them.

2. To insert into the Constitution of the USSR the following additions:

(a) Supplement Article 14, point (a) of the Constitution of the USSR, after the words "Representation of the Union in international relations, conclusion and ratification of treaties with other states" with the words:

"The establishment of the general procedure in the mutual relations between the Union Republics and foreign states." This point thus reads as follows:

"(a) The representation of the Union in international relations, conclusion and ratification of treaties with other states, the establishment of the general procedure in the mutual relations between the Union Republics and foreign states."

(b) Supplement the Constitution of the USSR with Article 18a as follows:

"Article 18a. Each Union Republic has the right to enter into direct relations with foreign states, to conclude agreements with them and exchange diplomatic and consular representatives with them."

(c) Supplement article 60 of the Constitution of the USSR with point (e) as follows:

"(e) Establishes the representation of the Union Republic in international relations."

3. To transform the People's Commissariat for Foreign Affairs from an All-Union into a Union-Republican People's Commissariat.

(Signed) KALININ, Chairman of the Presidium of the Supreme Soviet of the USSR.

GORKIN, Secretary of the Presidium of the Supreme Soviet of the USSR.

*Moscow, Kremlin, February 1, 1944*







